



SEIZING HIS OPPORTUNITY.

The Major (on his way to try for the Big Trout, and, pondering on his fly-book). "Now I wonder what he'll take? What do you say, Smithers, eh?" Smithers (pulling up with alacrity). "Take, Sir! Well, Sir, THANKY, SIR, SUP O' WHISKY, SIR, FOR CHOICE!"

"LINES TO PHYLLIS."

How would you know I was the poet,
If I should write some "Lines to PHYLLIS,"
And PHYLLIS you?—no word to show it—
How would you know I was the poet?
Though I scarce dare to say you'd know it,
My inward fond conviction still is
That you would know I was the poet,
And wrote to you my "Lines to PHYLLIS."

FINISHING HOUSEKEEPING.

(CONTINUED.)

As to your bath, I scarcely know what to say. It certainly takes up a deal of room, and is a difficult object to conceal. If you can make shift with a hand-basin, or even a rub all over with a wet towel occasionally, so much the better. Or on your annual visit to the sea-side when the August Bank-holiday comes round, you may be able to have a dip. You will find it well worth trying, and I should be surprised if, at some time or other, you don't repeat the experience. I quite enjoy a yearly wash all over.

Now for the other features of your snugger. You can't very well do without a table (get one which rests evenly on its four legs, and with a drawer to it for bits of string) and two chairs, in case you ever have a visitor. At a pinch, you might substitute a camp-stool for one of the chairs, but it is not very hospitable. Besides these, you must undoubtedly have a small bookshelf, preferably one of those delightfully quaint arrangements of four pieces of knotted rope and three boards, hanging on a nail in the wall. With this, you can have quite a respectable little library of the penny books now so much in vogue.

Pictures I must leave to your individual taste. A good deal of effect can be got out of the supplements of illustrated papers, neatly tacked against the wall, with edgings of brown paper. I saw the other day a most artistic fire-screen, made of a towel-horse, backed with mill-board, on which were gummed a very fine collection of operatic and other portraits given away with cheap cigarettes. This, however, is beyond the range of the average bachelor. Other adjuncts will be an eighteenpenny looking-glass (do not be put off with inferior makes), a half-crown American clock, and an Art tobacco-holder, made out of a salt-jar. You will then, I think, be complete, and at a cost of about thirty-five shillings. I may tell you in a further letter how to give your first "supper" party.



THE TRAVELS OF THE STREAMERS LAST YEAR.

LOWTHER ARCADIAN LATIN.

DEAR MR. PUNCH,—When Sir WILLIAM HART-DYKE said that Mr. JAMES LOWTHER "had gone to the top of the tree to select his big fish," need he have pleaded a coral reef in extenuation of the mixed metaphor? It will not have escaped your classical eye that the two ideas have "met afore" as long ago as HORACE'S

Piscium summa genus haesit ulmo,
Nota quae sedes fuerat columbis,
Et superjecto pavidæ natarunt
Eguae damæ.

In fact the correlation of ideas was there extraordinarily prophetic, for it would appear that, in the flooding of dykes recorded by HORACE, harts out of their depth were similarly conspicuous. True, damæ is feminine, but this would be the poet's noted gallantry—place aux dames.

Yours heartily, QUEER FISH.

"WHAT SHE REALLY WANTED."

(A Recollection of Wedding Presents.)

A COMPLETE set of *Smith's Poems*, bound in half-morocco, with the author's autograph. 8 Chinese gongs, 4 musical chimes, 6 silver card-cases, an Indian "Pookah," 18 paper knives, 7 brass blotters, 12 *Bradshaws*, A. B. C., and directory holders, 8 umbrella stands, 1 patent self-emptying ink-stand, 45 napkin rings, 1 stuffed bear, 5 framed engravings of the "Roll Call," an Abyssinian steel engraved war knife, a button bag, 7 silver-plated egg-boilers,

And a safety coal-scuttle fastener.



THIS YEAR.



THE OPEN MOUTH; OR, THE INTEGRITY OF CHINA.

British Lion. "It's all right, JOHNNY CHINAMAN, WE'VE COME TO A PERFECTLY FRIENDLY ARRANGEMENT."
Russian Bear (pleasantly). "WE'VE GOING TO DIVIDE YOU."



A STRICT MORALIST.

Little Ehel. "OH, PAPA, I THOUGHT YOU SAID WE OUGHT ALWAYS TO SPEAK THE TRUTH?"

Papa. "CERTAINLY, DEAR. WHY?"

Little Ehel. "WHY—WHEN YOU GAVE THAT MAN A SHILLING, YOU SAID, 'HERE'S A GLASS OF BEER FOR YOU.' THAT WASN'T TRUE!"

THE DINNER CHAIRMAN'S VADE MECUM.

(Compiled for the use of Orators during the Month of May Mouthings.)

Question. You are accustomed to take the chair at a public dinner?

Answer. Yes. Or, to speak by the card, a dinner for the rest of the company.

Q. Why, do you not partake of the good cheer before you with the rest of your convives?

A. Certainly not. I have to speak later on—a consideration which entirely destroys my appetite.

Q. Is there anything new to be said in the loyal toasts?

A. No; and therefore it is better to return to the simplest form, which is sure to be received with heartfelt enthusiasm.

Q. What can be said about the United Service?

A. That it is absolutely delightful to expend millions in the furtherance of their interests.

Q. And can anything interesting be put in about the Houses of Parliament?

A. Not much. Sneers at the Lords are no longer popular, and the Lower House is too respectable to be anything but a dull subject.

Q. What about the toast of the evening?

A. That must be left to the Secretary, who will furnish the Chairman with the necessary facts, which may be mixed with original remarks, two-thirds humorous to one-third pathetic.

Q. How are the visitors to be treated?

A. With fulsome eulogy or comic depreciation, inspired by the pages of that excel-

lent manual, *Who's Who*. Particular attention can be paid to the entries under "Recreations" in that admirable work, for appropriate chaff.

Q. And in what terms does a Chairman respond to the toast of his own health?

A. In a few muttered words addressed to an audience composed of a gentleman fast asleep, the toast-master, and the waiters.

A BOOM IN BEGGARY.

(By Our City Editor. A.D. 1900.)

[According to *Hearth and Home*, the beggars of Philadelphia have formed themselves into a Company, with a Board of Directors to manage their affairs.]

MARKETS were fairly quiet yesterday, but most of the new Street Industrial Companies were eagerly inquired after by speculators. Owing to the height of the barometer and the weather forecast, the price of ordinary shares in the Crossing-Sweepers' (Belgravia) Syndicate

WEAKENED CONSIDERABLY in the earlier part of the day. They recovered, however, in the afternoon, when the news arrived that the syndicate has managed to

SUBSIDISE THE WATER-CARTS of the neighbourhood, so that a good supply of mud can be guaranteed, irrespective of weather. Destitute Orphans were in good demand, as the Company has employed several talented writers to supply

NEW AND PATHETIC STORIES

to be poured into the ears of the charitable by the Company's servants. This is an excellent stroke of business, and is sure to result in an increased dividend for the shareholders. Organ-Grinders (Ordinary) fell off a point or two, owing to the competition caused by the large number of German bands which have arrived recently. We hear that some of the shareholders are indignant at the small

NUMBER OF MONKEYS

supplied by the Company, which, they allege, is the real cause for the unsatisfactory receipts. We would direct the attention of any readers seeking for a really safe investment to the Touring Tramps Trust. The last balance-sheet of the Trust is exceedingly satisfactory, the only large item of expenditure, other than necessary payments for ragged clothes, being the rather numerous

POLICE-COURT FINES,

incurred by the Company's employees. On the other hand, the receipts are most encouraging. For the future, too, more attention is to be paid to the country branch of the business, and a large number of able-bodied tramps, equipped

WITH POWERFUL SHILLELAGHS,

and equally powerful vocabularies, will patrol the rural lanes, doubtless to the material benefit of the Trust. We do not much fancy the Disabled Soldiers Company; although its earnings are good at present, the charitable are beginning to notice that all the men of this class who appeal for aid tell

PRECISELY THE SAME STORY.

In preference, as a sound investment, we would recommend

THE AMALGAMATED ASSOCIATION OF PAVEMENT ARTISTS,

which is certain, we think, to pay a good dividend, and which has obtained exclusive rights over all the favourite "pitches" in the West-end.

LETTERS TO THE CELEBRATED.

(From Mr. Punch's Vagrant.)

TO MR. ALFRED AUSTIN.

RESPECTED LAUREATE.—It was my fortune many years ago to be present at a cheerful gathering of men of the world, journalists, and other good fellows. There had been a plentiful flow of soul, and the stories had been as good as the company, but at a late stage of the proceedings, as I remember, we all fell under the thrall of a certain past master in the business of high-spirited badinage. He rollicked on to right and to left while the rest pondered too late upon the repartees they might have directed against him. Finally our humourist turned upon a quiet and inoffensive gentleman with a burst of exuberant patronage and said, "Never mind, old man, we can't all be funny, can we?" "No," retorted the quiet man, "we can't, that's very true; but some of us try very hard, don't we?"

The application of this anecdote to you, oh, my Laureate, is not, perhaps, of that obviousness which we have been told Nature and Sir WALTER BESANT have exhausted. But I have read your latest effusion in the *Standard*, and in my vagrant fancy I see you poetizing away for all you are worth at the heads, let us say, of Mr. RUDYARD KIPLING and Mr. WILLIAM WATSON. "Never mind, RUDYARD, old man," I can hear you say, "we can't all write poetry, can we?" "No, ALFRED, we can't, but some of us try very hard, don't we?"

After all, it is something to have tried and to keep on trying. I know many men, solid, amiable, and distinguished, who have reached a blameless old age without ever having versified. Consider their wretched state: they have never set themselves to the task of chopping sentences into lengths; they have never scanned; they have never counted syllables; they have never, Heaven help them, rhymed. What do they know of joy who have never, for instance, fixed the word "Heaven" at the end of a stanza, and have not discovered after running through the alphabet, that "heaven" is the best admissible rhyme to it? And the august delight of fixing "heaven" in, of making it, in spite of itself, fit your intentions, of seeing "celestial sunset fires That lift us from this earthly heaven" (how many foot pounds had the particular celestial sunset fire, the flaming solar yeast, that lifted you, oh, my poet and pride?) and, so proceeding till you wind up the stanza and clasp on the predestined rhyme with "darkly silent cypress spires" (surely you didn't expect them to be brightly shouting?), "pointing the way from hill to Heaven." These joys and that delight have been yours. For you are a singer, and if any envious linnet should ask you how you sing, you are entitled to reply that you sing after your own fashion, and leave linnets and TENNYSONS and KIPLINGS and WATSONS to follow theirs.

And now let us have a little chat about *The City of Flowers*, which eloquently illuminated the darkly silent columns of the *Standard* on the 28th of April. It is a long poem—forgive the word; it is suggested by your own compression of poet, *metri gratia*, into pote in the third stanza—and out of the twenty-three stanzas I cannot make anything but a paltry selection of beauties. I wished to do this last week, but the fates and your own thoughtlessness prevented me. Your poem appeared on a Friday, and by the time I had roused myself from the ecstasy into which its perusal had plunged me, and had seized the eulogistic pen-holder, lo! it was too late to write for publication in the ensuing number of this journal. May I beg you for the future not to publish anything later in the week than Thursday?

However, to my task. It shocks me to think how terribly old we are all getting. Since the year 1861, as you justly and beautifully remark, "Nigh on eight lustres now have flown" (they had to fly instead of running or walking or passing because they were going to rhyme with "zone"). In 1861 I was alive, and you were already a pote. In 1861 RUDYARD KIPLING was still unborn, and a thousand other things that have happened since had not been thought of. It's a long period, and the thought of it irresistibly makes a man turn his mind to his latter end, nearer to him by nigh on eight lustres than when first with trembling heart you came to Florence. But why all this parade of the phenomena of Nature and your own fancy that attended your first coming to the City of Flowers? The season, it seems, was purple-sweet, figs were a-plucking, and grapes a-pressing, a dead Pote was being borne (see note) to Santa Croce, and the folk who walked after the deceased did so—how otherwise were they to do it?—with following feet. And Florence flung her gates ajar and gently led you by the hand, and became "more than a foster nurse" to you (positive, fost; comparative, foster; superlative, fostest;) but in spite of all Florence's temptations, you still remain devoted to Albion's crags and cradling sea—which is enormously gratifying and highly patriotic on your part. I note that you proceed to ask:—



CONSIDERATION.

Hilda. "THAT AWFUL OLD HAT, ELIA! WHY DO YOU WEAR IT?"

Elia (her younger Sister). "FOR YOUR SAKE, DEAR. I MUSTN'T BE TOO ATTRACTIVE, YOU KNOW!"

And, seems that welcome half-profaned,
If in your lap lain oft and long,
I fancy to have something drained
Of DANTE's soul and PETRARCH's song?

Don't worry, ALFRED; it's pure fancy, nothing more; as visionary and impossible as your use of the word "lain"—which I must admit to be pretty steep for a laureate. But, after all, who cares? My beautiful feelings are very important to me; yours are no doubt essential to your own well-being; but I assure you nobody else cares a rap about them. I don't wish to offend you, but I cannot help thinking that you are becoming just a little morbid about yourself and your fancies and your recollections of lap and love, and the unloving ones who live in spite of their own perpetual jarring (see how carefully I expound you to the general). And for myself, I confess, too, that all these peaches and pears and olives and wild bees, and green frogs singing on fig-tree boles, bore me to distraction; nor is it any consolation to me to know you went off into a deep, sweet swoon, during which you seemed immortally imparadised. It's too sugary and cloying, too carefully manufactured, too "*gesucht*," as the Germans say, to suit my taste. I fly for refreshment to other and manlier potes.

Never mind, ALFRED. Keep on trying, but don't get immortally imparadised again.

Yours faithfully,

THE VAGRANT.

THE FAVOURITE VEGETABLE OF THE PLUMBER.—Leeks.



Voice from above. "WHAT ARE YOU DOING DOWN THERE, PARKINS?"
Parkins. "I'M JUSH—FUTTIN' AWAY TH' PORT, SHIR!"

ECONOMICAL JUSTICE.

(A Scene ready for Performance in the near Future.)

PLACE—Study of his Lordship. The JUDGE seated at table with telephone receivers before him. Confidential Clerk in attendance.

His Lord. Now, BROWNE, have we got the cause list into order?

Clerk. Yes, my Lord. You have got a day in the Q.B.D., are presiding at the Central Criminal Court, and have also a divisional appointment.

His Lord. To be sure. *(Bell.)* Ah, there comes the signal from the Strand. *(Puts his ear to receiver, and speaks in reply.)* Yes, I see. You appear for the plaintiff? Twenty pounds paid into Court. And you say that

the brougham was on the wrong side of the road? *(Bell.)* There goes the C.C.C. *(Puts his ear to another receiver and speaks as before.)* And the prisoner was there? He had taken the plate from the pantry? Very well, you had better call your witnesses. *(Bell.)* Dear me, the Divisional Court! *(Business as before.)* I concur! *(In an undertone.)* Quite prepared to leave everything in my learned brothers' hands. Thank you.

Clerk (after waiting a couple of hours). Are you done, my Lord?

His Lord. Yes, I have adjourned for luncheon in all three places.

Clerk. You seem perfectly worn out, my Lord.

His Lord. And so I am. But I suppose the Government is right—it saves the expense of an extra Judge! *[Curtain.]*

AIRS RESUMPTIVE.

(Muscular Women Series.)

IV.—THE VICAR'S DAUGHTER.

A Fragment.

So sit and sing it, if you please,
 Sing it, my ALICE, while I lean
 Backward against your brawny knees,
 Beside the mown grass freshly green;
 The old sweet scent assails my nose
 Here where I nursed those early hopes,
 Watching you whack my helpless slows
 Far-humming to the rounded ropes.

"It is the Vicar's daughter.
 And her arm has grown so stout
 That I would be the willow
 With which she swipes about;
 And I would hardly wince a bit
 Although I ultimately split.

"And I would be the bulwark
 Upon her stalwart, stalwart shin,
 And all day long to shield her
 While her eye was getting in;
 And help her not to feel too sore
 When obviously "limb before."

"And I would be the gauntlet
 Upon her fairy finger-tips,
 To guard her knotted knuckles
 When steering through the slips;
 And bear the language of my love
 When people bowled her off her glove.

"Is she the demon trundler?
 I'd be the bounding, bounding
 sphere,
 Flung high and hard at random
 About the batsman's ear;
 And I would throb with happy throes,
 Letting her pitch me where she chose."

A trifle, but the best I could!
 Not tricked, I own, with gawds of art;
 But you, you found the matter good
 As coming solid from the heart;
 Nor would you keep me long in doubt,
 Nor deem my homage overbold,
 Though scores of fifty-five, *not out*,
 Leave many a woman proud and cold.

But, ALICE, what an hour was that,
 My hour of ventilated vows,
 When, beaten thrice, I lost a bat,
 And won a really splendid spouse!
 So sing that other which relates
 How, half in pity, half in pride,
 You undertook, with choice of dates,
 To be my own, my blooming bride.

"Love that bowls us at the net
 Just as we are nicely set,
 Shall he shoot and we regret?
 Shall we lose our shirt and fret,
 Or proceed to claim a let?
 No, not we!

Though our eyes be wringing wet,
 Though our stumps be all upset
 Thrice consecutively, yet
 Shall we pay our proper debt,
 Kisses three, for coronet?
 Certainly!"

Sweetheart, your hand (excuse my back)!
 This sport that made us man and wife,
 Did it not yield some prescient smack,
 Some symbol of our wedded life?
 For, dearest, in a moral sense,
 We keep our old relations still;
 You always break through my defence,
 Or send me flying where you will!

“All the little boys and girls
* * *
Tripping and skipping, ran merrily after
The wonderful music with shouting and laughter.

* * * * *

‘ For he led us, he said, to a joyous land
* * * * *

Where waters gushed and fruit-trees grew,

SIR M-CH-L H-CK-S-B-CH (*apart*). "UM-HA-I'M NOT GOING TO FOLLOW *THAT* MUSIC!"

And flowers put forth a fairer hue,
And everything was strange and new."''

Robert Browning.





A USE FOR EVERYTHING.

Lady Agatha. "I KNOW IT'S A GREAT DEAL TO ASK, MR. DAUBENEY, BUT WOULD YOU, SOME DAY, GIVE ME ONE OF YOUR PICTURES FOR AN INSTITUTION I AM SO DEEPLY INTERESTED IN? IT IS A HOME OF REST FOR THE BLIND!"

"HOW TO END OUR NOVELS."

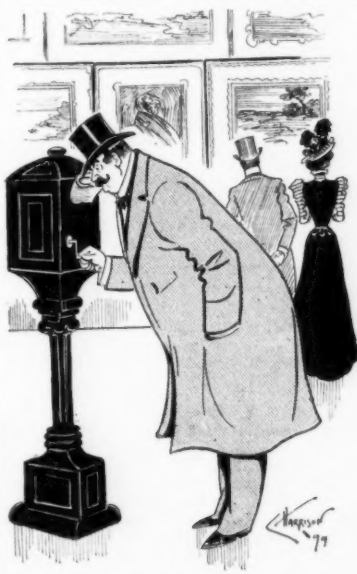
EVERY one is agreed that it is very easy to write a novel. Given a certain amount of experience, imagination, pens, ink, and paper, and the thing is done—all but the writing of it. But what is not so easy is to end a novel properly. How many otherwise charming stories have failed because of the last page! So, for guidance, we give some samples of really good endings.

THE "ARTISTIC RESTRAINT" NOVEL.

ANGELA never grew beautiful; in fact, some people would have called her plain—in a crowd. As for JONES, he died at the age of forty. But, after all, a good many people die before that, and so my tale ends happily.

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL.

Sometimes now, as I sit in my armchair of a long winter evening, made bright by this new-fangled electric light which I should have half laughed at, half despised in the days of my youth, I go over all the hair-breadth escapes, all the fun, folly, and fiendishness which have made up my short span of existence, and are here set down for my less fortunate readers. And as I sit, there comes into my mind one adventure, the strangest of all, so strange that no one would believe it, not even myself or my publisher. Perhaps one day I may be persuaded to tell it.



SUGGESTION FOR THE R.A.

A Mutoscope of the Pictures, for the use of visitors in a hurry. The Royal Academy "done" in five minutes.

OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.

The Death that Lurks Unseen, by J. S. FLETCHER (FISHER, UNWIN & Co.). Ugh! There's a creepy-crawly title for you! But do not be afeared; do not be repelled by the hideous cover, but boldly face it and take the Baron's advice—read it. The volume consists of nine short stories, of which, all being readable, the first three are the best, and the first of all out and away the best of the lot. In fact, the plot of the story from which the book as a collection takes its title, would, had it been thoughtfully developed, have given ample material for a one volume novel. No matter, the story as it is, is good and capitably told.

The Baron would recommend, by way of a strong sensation, BERTRAM MITFORD'S *The Weird of Deadly Hollow* (F. V. WHITE & Co.). It is a grim tragedy, the gleams of light humour being few and far between. But as a tale of crime and deadly, merciless vengeance it is horribly fascinating, and—not a story to be forgotten in a hurry.

THE BARON DE B.-W.

A CORRECTION.—At the Birmingham Dramatic and Literary Club dinner given on the occasion of the SHAKESPEARE Commemoration, Mr. SIDNEY LEE, the guest of the Club and of the evening, in the course of an interesting speech, is reported to have repeated a story about POET BROWNING having seen THACKERAY and WIDDICOMB, "the clown at ASTLEY'S," pass down the street together, and how WIDDICOMB was recognised by the passers-by, who appeared utterly ignorant of the personality of THACKERAY. First of all, WIDDICOMB held a unique position, not as clown, but as "Master of the Ring," and in this capacity he wore a peculiar sort of uniform. He appeared every night, and as every one, man, woman, and child, went to ASTLEY'S, and as WIDDICOMB was perpetually being written about and caricatured, it was highly probable that Londoners, and even country cousins, for no one came to town without visiting "HASHLEY'S," would be even more familiar with the personal appearance of WIDDICOMB than with that of Lord BROUGHAM, or even of F.M. the Duke of WELLINGTON. That they should not have recognised THACKERAY is natural enough. It was not his *matier* to show himself in public. He had not to appear every night in a circus, his hair and moustache à la Joinville, and attired in marvellous costume, somewhat resembling the uniform of a French naval officer, only finished off with the turn-down collar of a fourteen-year-old schoolboy. Had THACKERAY adopted this eccentric style, and, so attired, paraded the town or appeared nightly in a circus holding colloquies with the clown in the ring, he might have rivalled WIDDICOMB as a popular personage, and have been recognised and acclaimed by Londoners and country cousins.

THE HARDY ANNUAL.

It was a very pretty black flag which floated over the jail of Masterbridge, and as JOHN and TORFINDA watched it flapping in the keen Middlesex air, they instinctively joined hands and bowed their heads.

THE DOMESTICALLY EPIGRAMMATIC.

With a gesture of triumph HAROLD dashed off the word finis and laid down the quill, then took it up again, and ran it tenderly through the amber glory of his wife's hair.

"Have I helped you, darling?" she asked, lovingly.

"Very largely, sweetest," he answered, putting his arm round her ample waist.

"Tell me, you would never have written your novel if it hadn't been for little wife?" And HILDA looked in her husband's eyes with a charmingly provocative smile.

For answer, he stroked her yellow head, dallying with her curls. So had he, years ago, stroked his boat and gone from lock to lock. Then, as he quickened the stroke, he murmured, "You can't make bricks without straw-coloured hair."

THE COLONIAL—PATHETIC.

Under the Shadow of the Southern Cross there stands a stately palm tree, at the foot of which we buried HÉLOÏSE. There is no name upon the palm tree—only a date.



A CRITICAL CRICKET CRITIC.

Aunt Jane. "I THINK IT'S SO CLEVER, YOU KNOW, OF THAT MAN WITH THE BALL TO HIT THE BAT NEARLY EVERY TIME!"

"IN MY LIBRARY."

I CARE not for the letters black
That savour of the ages dead,
Nor for the bindings new that smack
Of posters and the Bodley Head.
All first editions I consign,
With authorship and all its seed,
To—regions more or less benign—
Two books supply my every need.
These teach a man to live at home,
And how to travel (with the price),
Where in the West the cocktails foam.
What he should pay for "slings" and ice.
In East or West a man is told
Where to put up for preference—
Such useful hints are cheaply sold
In manuals of reference.
Here are all travel's pleasures met,
The places where a man should dine,

The members of the Cabinet,
With odds and ends—a perfect mine!
Here can the man, whose weary mind
Is tired of endless annuals
Distraction, peace and knowledge find—
In the aforesaid manuals.

"BAR, BAR, WHITE SHEEP—ALAS! WITHOUT WOOL."

SIR,—At the recent general meeting of the Bar, the larger portion of the proceedings was taken up by the consideration of the financial condition of the Barristers' Benevolent Association, an institution which has always been of fascinating interest to me. It would appear that this excellent charity is sadly in need of funds, and there was a general expression of opinion that something should be done to obtain them—and done at once.

I know that amongst professional men there is an objection to a direct appeal to the public, but cannot this sentiment be carried too far? Surely if an entertainment could be organised by the members of the Bar, there would be nothing *infra dig.* in accepting a small fee for admission. Not so very long ago, *The Maske of Flowers* (originally produced at Gray's Inn) was played in the Hall of the Inner Temple (a distinguished practising barrister having accepted the responsibilities of licenseeship for that solitary occasion) in aid of a convalescent home. Could not something of the same sort be again attempted? There might be a variety entertainment. The Lord Chancellor is noted for his swordsmanship, and might try conclusions with a well known Lord Justice of Appeal, who is also accustomed to the mask and foils. Then the Lord Chief Justice, as a Past President of the Two Pins Club, might give a display of noble horsemanship. The talented ballet from *The Maske of Flowers*, whose *parade, moresco*, and other quaint dances were the talk of the town half a dozen years ago, might repeat their graceful and gracious evolutions. Sir EDWARD CLARKE—who has a singing face—might provide a little harmony, and the Attorney-General, as an athlete, some feats of strength. Many other "turns" will occur to barristers cognisant of the capabilities of their colleagues. Lastly, should it be deemed advisable to send the audience home in a good temper and with rapid despatch, I would willingly give a reading from my own poor works. I have known an audience counted by the thousand and dispersed in a couple of minutes with this finale.

I hope you will give the matter your immediate attention and most strenuous support. (Signed) A. BRIEFLESS, Jun.

Pump-Handle Court.

THE SPORT OF THE FUTURE.

["The lawns that were erstwhile cumbered with tennis nets now bristle with croquet hoops, and the 'date mallet' has driven out the frisky racket."—*The World.*]

WELCOME, Reason, on the scene,
Milder influences reviving!
Far too long have pastimes been
Senseless, useless, arduous striving,
Brutalising men of strength,
Dangerous to those who lack it:
Lo! it speaks their doom at length—
The decadence of the racket.

Purged from customs fierce and rude
Soon shall sports become more gentle,
(As the grosser kinds of food
Yield the palm to bean and lentil,
Roller skates long since are "off,"
Tennis is no longer O.K.,
Rivals threaten even golf,
As the fashion sets for croquet.

Hence, then, cricket, young and vain,
Football, fraught with brutal bustle,
You at Reason's light shall wane—
Modern upstart cult of muscle;
So may purer tastes begin
All our fiercer games refining,
Till, when apelicans come in,
I may get a chance of shining.

At the Crystal Palace

Male Visitor (reading Bill). What's the meaning o' this, MARIAR? Exhibition of the Article Club?

Well-informed Female Partner. Why, a show of them literary gents, stoopid!

ESSENCE OF PARLIAMENT.

EXTRACTED FROM THE DIARY OF TOBY, M.P.

House of Commons, Monday, May 1, 12.30 P.M.—Ushered on the scene by Big Ben booming midnight JOHN O' GORST rises to explain. After his speech last Friday,

the noble lord communicates with the inconsiderable Commons. It is true the Education Department has of late been baulked in endeavour to improve and extend education. Also undeniable that, according to custom, when a Minister is thus rudely treated by his colleagues—is

appeasable animosity of the clerical party. His place empty, "that secret influence behind the Lord President of the Council guiding the Cabinet in educational matters," which has not eluded the piercing glance of Mr. BRYCE, would take good care the post was filled by some one more tractable.

Cawmell-Bannerman quite right in his suggestion that JOHN O' GORST's services might be utilised in another post in the Government. It is one of the marvels (perhaps not one of the mysteries) of English public life, that a man who, for intellectual capacity, debating power, and Parliamentary aptitude, has only two equals on the Treasury Bench, should after thirty-three years' service to his party, still rank as Under-Secretary. Retirement from the Education Board would not, in this case, mean promotion. With JOHN O' GORST seated below the gangway the House of Commons would be an infinitely livelier place. But the cause of national education would suffer a blow irremediable during the life of the present Government.

Business done.—Budget Bill discussed.

Tuesday. — As HART-DYKE shrewdly observed just now, JEMMY LOWTHER has "gone to the top of the tree and has caught a very big fish." This imagery suggests a charming picture: the Right Honourable J., with sea-boots on his legs, a sou'-wester clouding his manly brow, a net over his massive shoulders, stalking a tree. He approaches with the caution born of knowledge that if the tree gets wind of his scent all is lost. Skill, caution, long Parliamentary training, and some hints acquired on the judicial bench in connection with the Jockey Club, prevail. He reaches the tree unobserved; climbs its hoary trunk; reaches its towering top; deftly casts his net, and, truly, catches a very big fish. It is the Lord High Chancellor—higher than usual, being up a tree.

This thing is not an allegory. The form of the narrative is due to the poetical temperament and natural gifts of HART-DYKE. What happened in plain prose was that the Lord Chancellor, seeing an opportunity of doing a little electioneering business, presided at a meeting summoned to select a candidate, not to fill the seat of our dear and lost JOHN MOWBRAY, that can never be



JEMMY LOWTHER AND HIS UNEXPECTED HAUL(SBURY).

introducing Education Estimates, there is clamour for his resignation. CAWMELL-BANNERMAN, most genial of men, voiced demand in House. Outside the Press, Ministerial and Opposition, for once unanimous, demand JOHN O' GORST's head on a charger. At this solemn midnight hour the Vice-President explains why he will not go.

Cannot trust himself to speak of the child of his fancy, the Committee of Council. Only a mother's heart could vibrate to the pangs of prospect of such separation. Not forcing himself even to mention that sainted body, he shows how he sticks to his post because, if he were to resign, the action would be an affront to his revered leader, the Lord President. As he explained to the Committee on Friday, he (JOHN O' GORST) is but a time-honoured subordinate. The Lord President is the Education Department; the Vice-President is merely the telephonic apparatus by means of which

prevented from doing what his conscience and judgment tell him is right, compelled to do what his knowledge and experience assure him is wrong—he resigns. The head of the Education Department being in sight of all men in that position, sticks to his post. Why should his lieutenant, who has no responsibility, take the initiative? Let M. le Lor President fire first.

That is JOHN O' GORST's position, deliberately assumed, cynically avowed. Judged by axioms of logic it is impregnable. SARK says it is easy to understand the force of temptation in Opposition circles to attack a Ministry by girding at the Vice-President of the Council. If they were concerned solely for cause of Education they would, he insists, discountenance any attempt to drive JOHN O' GORST from the Board. No man more than he has close at heart the interests of Education. In endeavouring to further them he has incurred the un-



The MARKISS trots out the British Housemaid. (This comes of going into new Metropolitan Areas.)

done; but to occupy it. There is an Order which, read at the opening of every Session, threatens blood-curdling penalties for any peer who meddles with an election. Here, caught *flagrante delicto*, is not an ordinary peer, but the prime of peers, the peerless peer, the Lord High Chancellor! No wonder HART-DYKE on the sudden shock sees strange visions of large fish in unwonted quarters. As for JEMMY, an unusual gravity clouds his brow. The Lord Chancellor, he says, is the only Tory left in the Government. He of all men would not desire to lay rough hands on the sacred fossil. But duty is no respecter of persons. So he doggedly climbs the tree, catches his fish, and empties it out of his net on the floor of the House of Commons.

Business done.—Right Hon. JAMES LOWTHER moves for Select Committee to inquire into alleged breach of privilege by the Lord High Chancellor. After debate, motion withdrawn.

House of Lords, Thursday.—The MARKISS is nothing if not logical. Bill brought in from other House proposing to make compulsory provision of seats for shop assistants in Scotland. In the Commons request seemed so reasonable not a voice uplifted in opposition. Rattled through all its stages; entered Lords brimming with hope and expectation of equally friendly reception. The eagle eye of the MARKISS fell on the unpretentious work. Instantly discerned the tremendous potentialities of domestic revolution hidden from duller gaze.

"The image of the housemaid crosses my mind," said the Premier, solemnly.

Inclination on part of the younger peers to titter. What particular PHYLLIS was it that succeeded in fascinating the Lord of Hatfield to the extent that he had enshrined her as an image, which, amid the imperial cares of State occasionally crossed his mind? The matter too serious for jesting. What the MARKISS was intent upon was the desire to do justice all round. If the shop-girl had seat provided for her by her employer, why not the housemaid? Cases



MR. LOUGH ON TWO-THIRDS OF A HORSE.

"A horse is a valuable animal, but one-third of a horse is only fit for cat's-meat."



ONE FOR HIM!

Labour Agitator. "UP AND DOWN THAT FIELD YOU TOIL, POOR SLAVE, SO YOUR H.E.D-HEARTED MASTER MAY FATTEN AND GROW RICH!"

Small Farmer (justly annoyed). "YOU'RE A LIAR! IT'S ME OWN LAND!"

obviously exactly parallel. No housemaid, however exhausted, would presume to sit down, upstairs, downstairs, or in my lady's chamber, until she asked and had obtained permission from her mistress. The MARKISS not the man to benefit one class at the expense of another.

So the image of the housemaid prevailed, and Colonel DENNY's little bill, warmly welcomed in many modest homes in Scotland, was smashed.

"Very amusing speech," said the down-cast DENNY; "but what 'll they say in Kilmarnock? Isn't there a line somewhere about some one having his jest and others his estate? Anyhow the MARKISS has had his joke and I may lose my seat, which I won for him by a not too large majority at the General Election."

Business done.—The MARKISS sits on the Seats for Shop Assistants Bill.

THE UTOPIAN JOURNAL.

(Suggested by Lord Rosebery's speech at the Dinner of the Newsvendors' Benevolent Institution on May 3.)

Householder sings:—

A PAPER without any leaders,
A daily without any fads,
With plenty of news for its readers,
And truth (even down to its "ads")?

Coming out through the week, but on one day
Giving buyers and sellers a rest;
We need no American Sunday
With mammoth news-sheets to digest?

For 'orrows and wars and divorces
Six mornings of print still suffice,
With a weekly surcease from race-horses
And betting, or shares and their price?